


ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE
Epping Rural District,
FOR THE YEAR 1898.



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ANNUAL REPORT

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Epping Rural District



FOR THE YEAR 1898.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you my Annual Report upon the Epping Rural District for the year 1898.

The general characteristics of the district as regards the chief geological and physical features have been given in previous Annual Reports, and it is unnecessary to re-state them here. The mode of life and habits of the people in so far as they influence the health of the district have also been commented upon, and do not now call for further remark. It may be well, however, to call attention to the steady and important increase of population taking place in the southern portion of the district. During the ten years 1881 and '91 the increase of population in Loughton alone had been at the rate of over 36% of the inhabitants, and there is every reason to believe that since the last census this rate has not decreased. In Chigwell, and other adjoining parishes, a rapid increase is also taking place. With this increase of population, and corresponding increase in the number of habitations, produced by the remarkable and rapid expansion of Greater London in this direction, social changes, also, are taking place in the character of the people, the quiet, old-fashioned, easy-going, and long-lived rural type are fast dying out, and in their place we have a class of people scarcely differing in their tastes and habits from a busy town population. Whether or not these changes are for the material benefit of the district is not a question to be discussed here; they are such, however, as must have a depreciatory effect upon our health statistics, and therefore, should not be entirely lost sight of in considering this Report.

(II.) *Inspections.*

The following inspections have been made during the year, viz.:—

- January.—Theydon Bois. A Dairy Farm, house, and premises.
 „ Woodside, North Weald. Cottages with cases of infectious disease.
 „ Thornwood Common. Ditto.
 February.—Loughton, York Hill. House with infectious disease.
 March.—North Weald. Various houses inspected, and enquiries made respecting an outbreak of Measles.
 „ Epping Upland. Ditto, and re-inspected with reference to drainage defects, and the question of School closure.
 April.—Nazeing. Road ditches receiving overflow drainage, and causing a nuisance.
 „ Epping Upland. Re-inspection of houses, etc., with reference to Measles outbreak.
 „ Rye Hill. Ditto.
 May.—North Weald. Houses and premises at Woodside, and Woodfield Terrace, with infectious diseases.
 „ Isolation Hospital. Special inspection of the buildings and premises with Dr. Thresh.
 June.—North Weald. Woodfield Terrace, and Woodside, houses and premises re-inspected.
 „ Epping, Forest Side. Ditch separating private premises from the Forest, etc.
 „ North Weald, Thornwood Common. Cottages and premises inspected in consequence of infection.
 „ North Weald, Woodside. Inspected cottages with reference to deficiency of w.c. accommodation.
 „ North Weald, The Schools. As to effect of Measles epidemic on attendance.
 July.—North Weald, Tyler's Green. Cottages, with reference to defective water supply.
 August.—Loughton, Smart's Lane. Houses inspected with reference to nuisances from dilapidations, defective drainage and dirty premises.
 „ Loughton, York Hill. House and premises inspected with reference to Typhoid Fever.
 September.—Loughton, Goldings Hill. House and premises inspected with reference to infection.
 October.—North Weald, Tyler's Green. House inspected with reference to Typhoid Fever.
 „ Nazeing, Bett's Lane. Defective drainage of cottages.
 „ Harlow. St. Mary's College and other houses inspected, and enquiries made respecting outbreak of Scarlet Fever.
 „ Chigwell. Inspected with Sanitary Inspector the River Roding and tributaries, also the brook at Henwood Side, the gravel Lane, and Pudding Lane Sewage Works, and houses on the Woodford Road.

(III.) *Sanitary Improvements Effected.*

The most important perhaps has been the sinking of a new public well and the erection of a pump at Rye Hill. Several trial-holes had to be made, but water of good quality, and plentiful, was found in a convenient situation, and by permission of Mr. Wythes, Lord of the Manor, the well was constructed and the pump erected. This cannot fail to be a great boon to the inhabitants, who, hitherto, have been entirely dependent upon ponds, or when these failed, as they invariably

did in the summer, they have had to trust to the landlord, or to your Council, to send round a water-cart, from which they could obtain a limited supply at 1d. a pailful.

This plan of providing water by the sinking of wells for public use in outlying villages, and groups of cottages, is one which has scarcely received the consideration it deserves; statements by old residents as to the impossibility of finding water in any particular place, are too readily accepted. Both at Epping Long Green, and at Rye Hill, it was a tradition believed in by most of the people that no water could be found, but in the former place two borings were made many years ago at my suggestion, each of which was successful, and from these an abundance of good water has been yielded ever since.

The public well at Roydon threatened to fail during the prevalence of the drought in the autumn, but by deepening the well, a better supply was obtained and the failure of the well was prevented. New wells have also been sunk during the year at Matching, and at Hastingwood Common, for the better supply of cottages in these places. In the matter of drainage, several ditches, water-courses, and ponds have been cleansed in North Weald, Sheering, Theydon Garnon, and Theydon Bois, and a new Flushing Tank has been constructed for the drainage of Woodfield Terrace, North Weald. Another sanitary improvement of great importance to the district which has been decided upon, and commenced during the year, has been the building of a new ward at the Isolation Hospital, and the improvements and additions to the old wards, and to the caretaker's cottage. This will be more fully described when dealing with the Hospital itself, and need not here be further alluded to. It will be convenient here to insert the report of Mr. Bell, the Sanitary Inspector.

MR. BELL'S REPORT OF WORK DONE.

Inspections and re-inspections	...	...	...	...	...	...	483
Notices to abate or remove nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	...	263
Letters <i>re</i> nuisances, water supply, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	300
Certificates for new houses under Water Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
Number of houses certified	...	...	...	...	...	...	46
„ new houses connected to public sewers	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
„ samples of water submitted to M.O.H.	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
„ „ „ „ Public Analyst	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„ dairies and cowsheds on register	...	...	...	...	...	...	58
„ „ „ registered during year	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„ new wells dug 3, deepened 1	...	...	...	...	...	...	4

DWELLING HOUSES.

Number of notices to abate overcrowding	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ convert privies to water closets	...	...	...	...	...	7
„ „ „ „ dry earth closets	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ cleanse w.c.	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ owners letting new houses before being certified	...	...	...	...	...	19
„ „ provide ashbins, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	14
„ „ „ new privies or w.c.	...	...	...	...	...	18
„ „ repair and make habitable	...	...	...	...	...	3
„ „ „ privies and w.c.	...	...	...	...	...	9
„ „ „ and limewash interior of dwellings	...	...	...	...	...	7
„ „ „ roofs of dwellings	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ remove privies and urinals	...	...	...	...	...	4
„ dwelling houses made habitable	...	...	...	...	...	6
„ „ demolished or closed	...	...	...	...	...	4

UNDER HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES ACT.

Number of notices to make dwellings habitable	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„ houses under notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„ „ made habitable	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ closed	...	...	...	...	...	...	2

DRAINAGE, ETC.

Number of notices to connect house and w.c. drains with sewer	...	...	...	...	...	...	38
„ „ cleanse and drain premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
„ „ „ gully traps	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
„ „ construct cesspools, etc., to drains and privies	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
„ „ cover over and ventilate cesspools and privies	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
„ „ discontinue, fill up, etc., cesspools, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
„ „ divert drains from ditches, brooks, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
„ „ disconnect sink pipes from drains	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
„ „ empty and cleanse cesspools and tanks	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
„ „ open and cleanse drains	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
„ „ pipe ditches	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ provide filters to drains	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ „ gully traps to drains	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
„ „ „ urinals	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ repair and drain surface pavements	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
„ „ „ and pave and drain cab stand	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ remove w.c. discharge pipe from inside dwelling	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ ventilate w.c. pipes	...	...	...	...	...	...	12

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Number of infectious cases removed to Hospital	...	...	...	...	...	...	39
„ dwellings disinfected	...	...	...	...	...	...	50
„ printed instructions given to parents and others	...	...	...	...	...	...	57
„ notices to disinfect clothing	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
„ „ „ houses, rooms, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
„ „ „ schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ to protect milk from infection	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ re employing persons from infected houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
„ „ to limewash, etc., rooms after infection	...	...	...	...	...	...	44
„ „ to isolate cases of infection	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
„ „ to schoolmasters and managers and employers	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
„ „ to remove cows and milk from near infected premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

WATER SUPPLY.

Number of notices to provide domestic supply	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
„ „ „ water flush to w.c.	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ cleanse water tanks	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ „ wells	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„ „ protect and cover over well	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ repair pumps	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Proceedings before Justices for order to cleanse and protect well, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

MISCELLANEOUS.

Number of notices to bury corpse	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ cleanse brooks, ditches, ponds, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	29
„ „ disinfect „ „ „	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ cleanse piggeries, fowl houses, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
„ „ discontinue depositing gas lime, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ „ pumping sewage	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ „ dust contractors re removal of ashes and refuse	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
„ „ drain and improve cowsheds	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ limewash bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ „ provide manure receptacles	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
„ „ remove ashes, refuse and manure	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
„ „ „ gipsy vans and tents	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
„ „ „ pigs, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
„ „ register cowsheds, etc., and dairies	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
„ „ take samples of water	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
„ „ surveyors, gas and water companies	...	...	...	...	...	...	16

(Signed) J. H. BELL,
Sanitary Inspector.

(IV.) *Action taken to prevent the spread of Infection.*

There were 77 cases of infectious diseases notified during the year, viz.: Scarlet Fever 32, Diphtheria 24, Typhoid Fever 10, Erysipelas 10, Puerperal Fever 1. The total exceeded by three the number of cases notified for 1897, but it was 27 less than the mean for the four years 1895-98, which was 104. The chief decrease was in the number of Scarlet Fever cases.

The following tables give the number of cases notified for each sub-district, and for each month, during the year.

NOTIFICATIONS IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS.

	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Typhoid Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	TOTAL.
CHIGWELL, Sub-District ...	14	6	6	2	1	29
EPPING, Sub-District ...	2	14	3	2	...	21
HARLOW, Sub-District ...	16	4	1	6	...	27
TOTALS ...	32	24	10	10	1	77

NOTIFICATIONS IN DIFFERENT MONTHS.

	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	TOTAL.
Scarlet Fever ...	2	...	2	2	2	5	...	2	1	9	3	4	32
Diphtheria ...	1	...	...	...	3	9	4	...	2	1	3	1	24
Typhoid Fever...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	3	...	1	4	...	1
Puerperal Fever	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Erysipelas ...	...	1	...	2	2	1	...	...	...	2	1	1	10
TOTALS ...	3	2	2	4	7	16	4	6	3	13	11	6	77

SCARLET FEVER.

The number of cases notified was fewer than for any year since the present district was formed, and with the exception of a localised outbreak in Harlow in the month of October, due to infection being imported, the disease was never prevalent in an epidemic form. The disease continues to be remarkably mild in character, and during the year it caused only one death, namely, that of an invalid London child in a Convalescent Home at Loughton. It is this very mildness, in fact, which constitutes the chief difficulty in eradicating the disease, as there is no doubt that many of these milder cases escape notice until the disease has spread from them to others, in whom it becomes sufficiently pronounced to attract attention. The public need to be warned that in all cases where children are affected with sore throat and a rash, however slight these may be, a doctor should be consulted at once.

DIPHTHERIA.

Twice as many cases of this disease occurred as in the previous year, and this increase was almost entirely due to a localised outbreak which occurred at Thornwood Common in the months of May and June. The first of these cases occurred in one of a long row of some twenty or five-and-twenty cottages, known as Woodfield Terrace. The drainage of these cottages, as was pointed out in my special reports at the time, was most defective, the arrangement being one of shallow, pervious cesspools close to the back doors, with the overflow emptying into drains connected directly with the water course passing through a culvert under the road, in which, in dry weather, the sewage stagnated in large quantities, giving rise to the most offensive smells. The first cases were treated as trivial, and were not put under medical treatment, and it was not until further and more serious cases arose from these that the disease became known by a doctor being called in. Subsequently the mother of these children attended two women in their confinements, with the result that cases of diphtheria broke out in each of the houses. In connection with this outbreak there were eleven cases notified, all of which were removed to the Isolation Hospital. A general emptying of cesspools and cleansing and disinfecting of the premises was carried out under the instruction of the Sanitary Inspector, and subsequently an automatic flushing tank was fixed at the head of the sewer with a view to preventing any future accumulation of sewage matter therein. These measures may be said to be satisfactory so far as they go, but so long as the present cesspools are allowed to remain in their present position, and so long as the drainage is simply washed into the bed of the brook to remain there until the heavy rains carry it away, the danger of further outbreaks of disease must continue. Two of the cases notified in the district occurred at Uplands Convalescent Home, Loughton, and were therefore presumably of invalid London children.

TYPHOID FEVER.

Judged by the number of notifications, this disease also showed just twice the prevalence of the previous year. With the exception, however, of a small outbreak which occurred in North Weald in the months

of October and November, the cases were all of a sporadic character. With regard to the North Weald outbreak, the initial case came from Buckhurst Hill, from the midst of an outbreak which was at that time prevalent there. The case occurred in a small over-crowded cottage, and unfortunately could not be removed to Hospital when notified. The consequence was that two other cases occurred in the same family, each of which was removed to Hospital. Of these three cases, all of whom were young men belonging to the same family, two proved fatal. The disease was of a very virulent type.

OTHER ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

Of these the only one which showed undue prevalence was Measles. Several epidemics occurred during the year, the first being at Epping Upland in the month of April, and for which it became necessary to close the Schools there for a month. A second outbreak occurred at Theydon Bois and Theydon Garnon in the month of May, for which the Schools in both parishes had also to be closed; and a third outbreak in November in the parish of Theydon Garnon, although the majority of the cases were in the Epping Urban District, necessitated the exclusion of a large number of children from the Coopersale Schools. In June the disease was epidemic in North Weald. That the effect of shutting up the Schools in the case of such epidemics is to arrest them, rather than to stamp them out was well shown in the case of the Coopersale Schools, where, after the Schools had been closed for some weeks, cases of Measles ceased to occur in the parish; but later on in the year there was a recrudescence of the disease, and then all the children who had escaped the earlier visitation fell ill with it, and had to pass through it at a much less favourable time of year.

The cases of Erysipelas notified were scattered throughout the district, and were not confined to any particular season; they were chiefly confined to the outlying, or more rural parts of the district. Whooping Cough was almost wholly absent, and Small-pox was again entirely absent. With regard to this latter disease, it is to be hoped that the new Vaccination Act will not have the effect of greatly adding to the number of unvaccinated persons, for their increase in a district so closely associated with the world's great centre of commerce as this is, must inevitably be accompanied by the danger of fresh outbreaks of that formidable disease. Diarrhœa and Dysentery caused rather a larger number of deaths than in the previous year, and there was during the late autumn a prevalence of what is known as summer diarrhœa, especially amongst infants, but this appeared to be due more to the unusual heat than to any local or insanitary conditions. Influenza was directly responsible for seven deaths, but the disease was far less prevalent than heretofore. Phthisis, which is now more generally recognised as another of the infectious diseases, caused 17 deaths, 16 of which were of persons who belonged to the district.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

There were 39 patients received into the Hospital during the year (15 Males and 24 Females). Of these, 29 came from the Epping Rural

District, 6 from Chingford Urban, and 4 from Buckhurst Hill Urban Districts.

From the different diseases the numbers were: Scarlet Fever 21, Typhoid Fever 4, Diphtheria 14.

The following table summarises the particulars respecting each case.

CASES TREATED IN ISOLATION HOSPITAL DURING 1898.

No.	Date of admission.		Sex.	Age.	District from which received.	Nature of disease.	Remarks.	
1	Jan.	3	Female	19 yrs.	Buckhurst Hill	Ty'd. Fever	Disch'd	Feb. 21
2	"	31	"	8 "	North Weald	Scarlet Fever	"	Mar. 14
3	March	2	"	17 "	Chingford	"	"	April 13
4	"	18	Male	13 "	Loughton	"	"	" 30
5	"	29	Female	9 "	Harlow	"	"	May 11
6	April	15	Male	8 "	Buckhurst Hill	Ty'd. Fever	"	" 27
7	May	10	"	13 "	North Weald	Diphtheria	"	" "
8	"	"	"	10 "	"	"	"	" "
9	June	2	Female	10 "	"	"	"	June 23
10	"	6	"	5 "	"	"	"	" 22
11	"	"	"	14 "	"	"	"	" 20
12	"	7	Male	2½ "	"	"	"	" 22
13	"	9	Female	12 "	"	"	"	" 30
14	"	"	"	8 "	"	"	"	" "
15	"	13	Male	6 "	Buckhurst Hill	Scarlet Fever	"	July 25
16	"	20	"	10 "	North Weald	Diphtheria	"	" 2
17	"	"	Female	6 "	"	"	"	" "
18	"	23	"	29 "	Loughton	Scarlet Fever	"	Aug. 2
19	"	"	"	6 "	"	"	"	" "
20	"	"	Male	5 "	"	"	"	" "
21	"	"	Female	3 "	"	"	"	" "
22	July	5	Male	13 "	Buckhurst Hill	"	"	" 13
23	"	19	Female	5 "	North Weald	Diphtheria	Died	July 23
24	"	24	Male	8 "	"	"	Disch'd	Aug. 9
25	"	30	Female	13 "	Chingford	Scarlet Fever	"	Sept. 17
26	"	"	"	5 "	"	"	"	" "
27	Aug.	8	"	9 "	"	"	"	" 24
28	"	10	Male	7 "	Netteswell	"	"	" "
29	"	11	Female	10 "	Matching	"	"	" 17
30	"	17	"	3 "	Chingford	"	"	" 24
31	"	30	"	48 "	"	Diphtheria	"	" 12
32	Sept.	27	Male	25 "	Chigwell	{ Scarlet Fever and Ty'd. Fever }	Died	Oct. 17
33	Oct.	9	"	7 "	Harlow	Scarlet Fever	Disch'd	Nov. 24
34	"	"	Female	4 "	Matching	"	"	" "
35	"	13	"	6 "	Chigwell	"	"	" "
36	"	19	"	5 "	Netteswell	"	"	Dec. 15
37	"	20	"	6 "	Nazeing	Diphtheria	"	Nov. 11
38	Nov.	10	Male	30 "	North Weald	Ty'd. Fever	"	Dec. 24
39	"	20	"	27 "	"	"	Died	" 14

The Chingford and Buckhurst Hill Urban District Councils have continued their agreement to send their infectious cases to this Hospital, but the Epping Urban Council has withdrawn from it. During the year it has been decided to make considerable additions and improve-

ments in connection with the Hospital. These comprise a new permanent ward, for the accommodation of eight additional beds. This is to be provided with two entrances, and a moveable partition for the separation of the sexes. There is to be a heating apparatus, with which the old wards will also be connected, besides which, other means are to be adopted to render these wards more free from draughts, to improve the ventilation, and generally to make them more suitable for their purpose. Better accommodation is to be provided for the nurses, the caretaker's cottage is to be altered and improved, and finally the drainage is to be re-arranged. These works are already well in hand, and it is hoped they will be completed before the year is very far advanced. With reference to the management of the Hospital, under the Hospital Committee, it has been found that difficulties were constantly arising through the want of more definite instructions for the guidance of the caretaker and his wife, the nurses, and also the patients themselves, and by direction of your Council I drew up a code of Regulations, which have been printed and fixed in the Hospital, and by which it is hoped that future friction between the different persons concerned may be prevented.

(V.) Cause and Distribution of Disease.

Infant mortality in the three sub-districts was as follows, viz.: Chigwell 107.4 per 1000, Epping 90.9 per 1000, and Harlow 111.1 per 1000. That this mortality in the Harlow district is so much higher than in the others, points to the conclusion that there exist in that district conditions peculiarly inimical to the health of young children. An analysis of the cause of death shows it to be due chiefly to the two factors, either premature birth, or gastro-enteric disease, the first the result of a low standard of vitality, largely produced by over-crowding and defective housing, and the second to a great extent the result of improper feeding. In the Chigwell district a large proportion of the infant deaths were due to diarrhoea, which again suggests the evil of improper feeding.

(VI.) Sanitary Requirements of the District.

The system of drainage which it has year after year been hoped would be provided for Woburn Avenue, and other parts of Theydon Bois, has not yet been commenced, and it is obvious that with the addition to the number of houses which is constantly taking place, the need for proper drainage there becomes more urgent. In certain parts of Chigwell the drainage is still of the most primitive character, and some attempt should be made to prevent the continued pollution of the Roding. At Harlow Common, Potter Street, Sheering, and other villages the drainage is defective, and calls for constant vigilance upon the part of the Inspector of Nuisances to prevent serious consequences following. There is still a serious want of water in some parts of the district; this is particularly so at Nazeing. The success attending the borings at Rye Hill should be an encouragement to make a similar effort at Nazeing, where there are reasons for believing water would be found without much difficulty.

PROCEEDINGS BEFORE MAGISTRATES.

In only one instance had legal proceedings to be taken during the year, which was in the case of an owner who failed to comply with a notice requiring the cleansing and protecting of a well. The order applied for was granted, and the defendant had to pay costs.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The population for the year is estimated at 16,873.

BIRTHS.

The Births registered were 434, which gives a birth-rate per 1000 of 25.7.

DEATHS.

The corrected deaths of persons belonging to the district were 258, which upon the estimated population gives a rate of 15.2 per 1000.

INFANT MORTALITY.

There were 46 deaths of infants under one year of age, or equal to a death-rate, measured by the proportion of deaths under one year to births registered, of 105.9 per 1000.

ZYMOTIC DEATHS.

The principal zymotic diseases caused 39 deaths, viz.: Measles 10, Diphtheria 5, Whooping Cough 1, Typhoid Fever 5, Diarrhœa 18. The death-rate from these diseases being equal to 2.3 per 1000.

The Local Government Board's Tables *A* and *B* of Mortality and Sickness in the district during the year, are appended to this Report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

TREVOR FOWLER,

L.R.C.P. & S.I., D.P.H., Camb.

Medical Officer of Health.

TO THE EPPING RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Epping, February 21st, 1899.

B) TABLE of POPULATION, BIRTHS, and of NEW CASES of INFECTIOUS SICKNESS, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the Year 1898, in the EPPING RURAL DISTRICT; classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Pub- lic Institutions being shown as separate lo- calities.	POPULATION AT ALL AGES.		Aged under 5 or over 5. (e)	Registered Births. (d)	Middle of 1898. (c)	NEW CASES OF SICKNESS IN EACH LOCALITY, COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.																											NUMBER OF SUCH CASES REMOVED FROM THEIR HOMES IN THE SEVERAL LOCALITIES FOR TREAT- MENT IN ISOLATION HOSPITAL.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
	Last Census. (b)	Estimated to (c)				FEVERS.													Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Group	FEVERS.													Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Group	Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Relapsing.	Puerperal.	Cholera.	Erysipelas.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				
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(H) Locality in which Infectious Hospital is situated.

ALFRED B. DAVIS,
PRINTER,
MARKET PLACE, EPPING,
And at LOUGHTON.